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9 Attorney for Jeri Coppa-Knudson, Trustee

10 **UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT**

11 **DISTRICT OF NEVADA**

12
13 IN RE: CASE NO. BK-N-14-50333-BTB
14 ANTHONY THOMAS and CASE NO. BK-N-14-50331-BTB
15 WENDI THOMAS, (Jointly Administered)
16 AT EMERALD, LLC, CHAPTER 7
17 Debtors.

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**DECLARATION OF HUDSON
STREMMEL IN SUPPORT OF MOTION
FOR ORDER CONFIRMING SALE BY
AUCTION; REQUEST FOR APPROVAL
OF PAYMENT OF COMMISSION TO
STREMMEL AUCTIONS**

**Hearing Date: January 8, 2019
Hearing Time: 2:00 p.m.**

Hudson Stremmel, under penalty of perjury of the laws of the United States,
declares:

1. I am a representative of Stremmel Auctions, Inc. I have personal knowledge
of the matters stated herein and would testify to the same if called to do so.

2. Beginning in the second half of 2017, Stremmel Auctions began working
with Jeri Coppa-Knudson regarding efforts to market a large specimen Brazilian emerald
owned by the bankruptcy estate.

3. For roughly 14 months we (Stremmel Auctions), have been marketing,
advertising, showcasing, reaching out to collectors and experts throughout the country and
around the globe with the goal of locating potential purchasers for the emerald specimen.

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1 4. During that time we have traveled to Tucson, Arizona to take part in the
 2 Tucson Gem Show (the largest, oldest and most prestigious gem and mineral show in the
 3 world), met with prospective buyers from all over the country, and fielded numerous phone
 4 calls and email inquiries from individuals requesting information about the emerald.

5 5. Many of the experts we contacted thought the size of the emerald was
 6 impressive, but the quality of the gem was regarded as far below satisfactory. As one expert,
 7 Brian Greenstone of Greenstone Fine Mineralia stated, “Not a particularly good mineral
 8 specimen being that the terminations are destroyed and it’s broken in several places. It needs
 9 a lot of lab work to make it presentable, and it’s hard to tell if the emerald itself is even
 10 gemmy enough to be used as cutting rough (most Brazilian emerald is opaque and not
 11 usable as gem material).”

12 6. What also came into question were the appraisals. Several people laughed at
 13 the claims and many said they were completely ridiculous, but unfortunately are rampant in
 14 the gem world. They tend to fool people, i.e. banks, the public and even auction houses.

15 7. Carl A. Schutze, managing director/designer at Emeralds International said,
 16 “are usually accompanied by ridiculous multi-million dollar retail replacement appraisals (a
 17 whole other issue)” and that it could maybe still fetch “pennies per carat.”

18 8. These types of reactions seemed to be the norm among both experts and
 19 collectors, many of whom thought we would be lucky to sell the specimen for more than
 20 \$1,000. Jacques van den Berg of MinFind stated, “In my humble opinion, this specimen as
 21 presented will not fetch \$250.”

22 9. For the past 14 months, these are the efforts set forth:

- 23 * The Emerald was professionally photographed by Asa Gilmore,
 24 owner of AG Photo.
- 25 * A professional Look Book Catalog was created to email and distribute
 26 to our clients and prospective buyers.
- 27 * Flyers were professionally made to distribute and mail out.
- 28 * Traveled to Tucson several times to be involved with the Tucson Gem
 Show.

- * -J.O.G.S. Gem and Jewelry Show
- * -Tucson Gem & Jewelry Show
- * -JG&M Expo Tucson Michigan St.
- * -Arizona Mineral & Fossil Show/HTCC Inn Suites
- * -Pueblo Gem and Mineral Show
- * -Howard Johnson Gem and Mineral Show
- * -La Quinta Gem and Mineral Show
- * -Rapa River Gem and Mineral Show
- * -Gem and Jewelry Exchange
- * -American Gem Trade Association
- * -Tucson Gem and Mineral Show
- * -22nd Street Mineral, Fossil & Gem Show
- * -AGTA GemFair Tucson
- * -Arizona Mineral and Fossil Show / Ramada Limited
- * -Executive Inn Mineral, Fossil, Gems & Bead Show
- * -The Fine Minerals International Show
- * -G&LW Tucson Gem Show - Gem Mall
- * -G&LW Tucson Gem Show - Holidome
- * -GBM Tucson Show
- * -Gem and Jewelry Show on Grant
- * -GIGM Shows / Clarion Gem, Mineral and Metaphysical Show
- * -GIGM Shows / Globe-X Gem Show
- * -Grand Avenue Mineral Show
- * -The Rock Show

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1 11. Stremmel Auctions contacted virtually everyone, to our knowledge,
2 associated with emeralds via social media. We contacted all major news organizations and
3 museums, and the University of Nevada Geology Department Gemology department,

4 12. Experts, museums and institutes in the industry from all over the world were
5 directly contacted. A few of the experts reached are as follows:

- * Forrest Snowden - CEO & Co-Founder, Aria Gems Inc.
- * Lee Wasson of Lee Wasson & Company, Bogotá Colombia - South America
- * Ron Pingeton, specimen investor, Denver Colorado.
- * Ron Ringsrind, appraiser
- * Bill Stevenson Kennedy Wilson Auction
- * Claudia Florian - Natural History Department at Bonhams Auction house
- * Nan Summerfield - Doyle Auction house
- * Private Asian Investors
- * Frederick H Leeds-rare metals investor
- * Emerald Expositions-San Juan Capistrano
- * International Gem Society
- * Blue Nile Gem Consultants - 1.7 million customers
- * Lenny Yudkowitz - Owner of Stone House Plus
- * Monica Kitt - The Arkenstone
- * Brian Greenstone - Owner of Greenstone Fine Mineralia
- * Carl A. Schutze - Managing Director/Designer at Emeralds International
- * Brian Kosnar - Mineral Classics
- * Jacques van den Berg - MinFind
- * Dr. John McCormick - University of Nevada, Reno
- * University of Nevada, Reno - Geology Department

- 1 * University of Nevada, Reno - Keck Museum
- 2 * Field Museum Chicago
- 3 * The Smithsonian
- 4 * Wayne Silver
- 5 * Ken Tersini

6 13. Social media was extremely prevalent for marketing as well and had a
 7 tremendous response. Some of the groups that were contacted and reached out are:

- 8 * Gemstones Online
- 9 * Gemstone Collectors
- 10 * Buy/Sale/Swap Gem Mineral Stones
- 11 * Rocks, Gemstones, Mineral and Crystals
- 12 * Crystal Shop (Gems, Minerals, Wire Wrap, Jewelry, Specimens and
 13 Crystal Rough)
- 14 * Precious Stones and Gems
- 15 * Crystals, Gems, and Healing Stones
- 16 * Natural Colombian Emeralds Group
- 17 * Gemstones (sell/buy)
- 18 * Facebook Marketplace

19 14. Stremmel Auctions' mailing list was utilized as well as all resources tied to
 20 the company, including all major news sources in Nevada and throughout the country.

21 15. The auction was conducted via the online platform HiBid. Bidding was
 22 accessible beginning on October 30, 2018 until November 15, 2018. Bidding concluded at
 23 10:00 am PST and the soft close method was utilized. During that time we had 1,408 views,
 24 18 watches, 5 registered bidders and fielded several absentee bids.

25 16. The successful bid was \$21,500 to a collector in Silicon Valley. We believe
 26 this is not only fair market value, but is on the upper end of the spectrum for a gem of this
 27 caliber.

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1 17. Stremmel Auctions incurred the following expenses in the marketing and
2 auction process:

3 * Professional Photography by Asa Gilmore - \$200
4 * Professional Look Book - \$63
5 * Flyers and postage - \$293
6 * Traveling to and from Tucson - \$675

7 DATED: November 29, 2018.

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9 /S/ Hudson Stremmel
10 Hudson Stremmel

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